

# Planning

One of Steven Covey's seven habits of highly effective people is, "Start with the end in mind."<sup>4</sup> This concept is the essence of planning. A clear vision and agreement of the end goals is essential for success. Effective planning:

- ◆ Provides a clear focus
- ◆ Supports monitoring and assessment of results and impact
- ◆ Facilitates new program development
- ◆ Enables an organization or coalition to look into the future in an orderly and systematic way

Most organizations and coalitions understand the need for annual program objectives and a program-focused work plan. Funders require them, and they provide a basis for setting priorities, organizing work, and assessing progress.



When government officials, business leaders, and citizens come together to build communities that enrich people's lives, that's planning.

– *American Planning Association*

An initial step in planning is to define the vision. The vision communicates what your organization believes are the ideal conditions for your community – how things would look if the issues important to you were perfectly addressed. By developing a vision statement, your organization makes the beliefs and governing principles of your organization clear to the greater community (as well as to your own members).

<sup>4</sup> Covey, S. *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. 1989. Free Press

### 1. Your vision statement should be:

- Understood by members of the community
- Broad enough to allow a diverse variety of local perspectives to be encompassed
- Inspiring and uplifting
- Easy to communicate – it should be short enough to fit on a T-shirt

### 2. Create a mission statement that describes what the group is going to do, and why it's going to do that.

Mission statements are action-oriented and might refer to a problem, such as “All citizens will enjoy easy access to parks and open space in our community” or “All citizens will have affordable opportunities and resources for physical activity.” Mission statements are:

- Concise – easy to understand and to remember
- Outcome-oriented
- Inclusive – engage all sectors of your community involved in your issue

### 3. Define objectives – specific measurable results for the initiative's broad goals. An organization's objectives generally lay out *how much of what* will be accomplished by when.

### 4. Outline strategies that explain how the initiative will reach its objectives.

Generally, organizations will have a wide variety of strategies that include people from all of the different parts, or *sectors*, of the community.

### 5. Create an action plan that describes in great detail exactly how strategies will be implemented to accomplish the objectives.

## Needs assessment and gap analysis

*The Community-Based Health Program Tip Sheet* defines a needs assessment as the process of obtaining and analyzing information to determine the current status and service needs of a defined population and/or geographic area.<sup>5</sup> All too often, people address issues by immediately jumping to develop a list of solutions before they truly need to address. They focus on “wants” before clearly identifying the “need.”

For example:

Wants	Needs
We want to build a new park	We need easily accessible places in our community where people can be physically active
We want better streetlights	We need to address safety issues for pedestrians
We want to build bicycle lanes	We need to identify how people can safely bicycle in our community, and also address the needs of motorists

<sup>5</sup> Beadle de Paloma, Frank & Luna, Elisa (Eds.) (1999). Proceedings from Annie E. Casey Foundation Conference: *Neighborhood Health Partnerships: Building a Strong Future*. Washington DC. <http://coach.aed.org/pubs/factsheets/-NeedsAssessment.pdf> (accessed 4/17/09)

Focusing on the “need” rather than the “want” can lead to multiple solutions rather than getting focused on a single solution, which may or may not be the best approach for your community.

For example, using the table on the previous page, if the need is accessible places in the community for people to be more physically active, the “want” might be a new park. However, through effective questioning, it might be that what is needed is a refurbishment of an existing park. Or perhaps there is a beautiful, accessible, and well-equipped park that is under utilized because children have to cross a major roadway to get to the park; there is inadequate parking; or people in the community simply are not aware of the park’s facilities. Then the “need” becomes different. It might be a new park, but perhaps a pedestrian/bicycle bypass for easy access to the park, improved parking facilities at the existing park, or a community awareness and education program.

One method of conducting a needs assessment is using asset mapping, a process of identifying community resources that will help accomplish goals. Asset mapping is focused on identifying a community’s capacity—identifying what the resources are in a community. Community capacity looks at all assets related to the community project including people, relationships, infrastructures, and financial resources. Knowing the assets of a community sets a foundation for effective planning.

## Developing asset maps

To develop asset maps, start by identifying community assets based on the AFI health indicators. A simple way to do this is to establish a list of all services, businesses, or other aspects that meet the criteria of the selected indicator. Develop a spreadsheet listing the identified asset (such as a park or fitness center), address for the asset, and indicator category. With asset mapping, it is also feasible to drive or walk through various neighborhoods to help identify assets. Talking to a variety of community members can be helpful. Word-of-mouth is a great way to find out information about community services.

Many communities have a Global Positioning Service (GPS) division in their city or county government. If GPS is available, data can be utilized to develop maps with data points plotted. If no GPS service is available, obtain a printed map of the community of focus, and plot all assets on the map. An example of an asset map related to the AFI health indicators for Muncie, Indiana is included on page 24.

## Gap Analysis from Indicators: Here's What is Missing

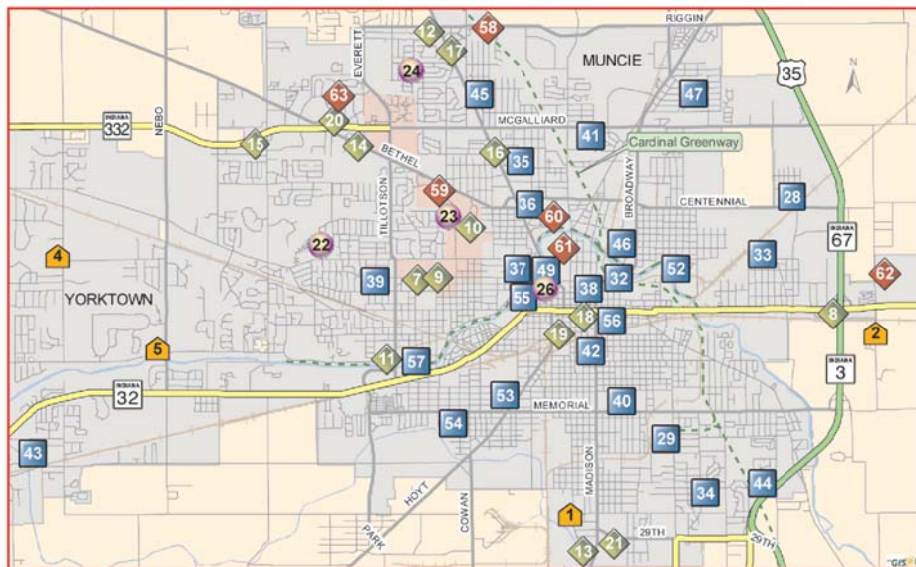
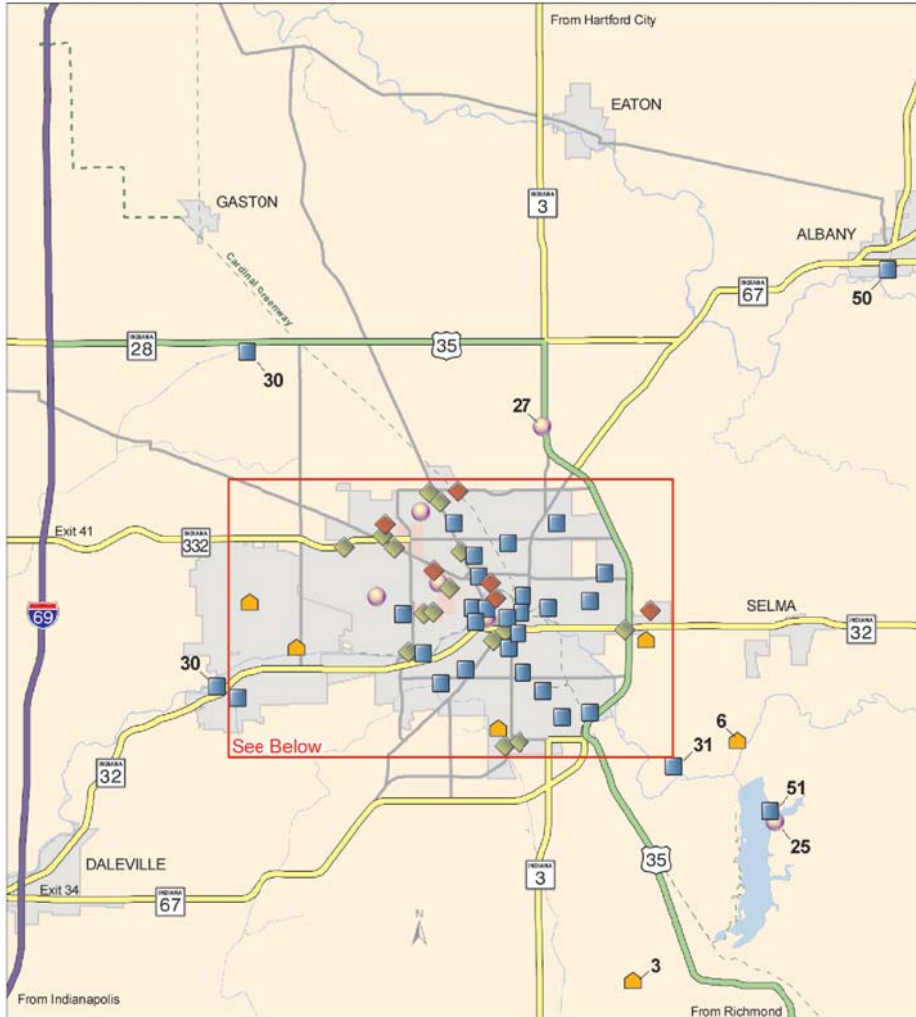
After developing an asset map, it can be reviewed to determine a community’s strengths as well as resources that may be lacking. Once an asset map is developed, needs can be identified based on those indicators that are not present, or poorly addressed, based on the asset map. A gap analysis is simply a process of comparing actual community assets to potential, desired assets. Once this step has been taken, plans can be developed to work to close the gap between the two.

Start the gap analysis process by reviewing the asset map, and determining which of the AFI health indicators have no, or few resources. Also look at geographic regions or neighborhoods that have a less than desirable amount of resources available. Take into account access and barrier issues.

Using information from the needs assessment and gap analysis you can begin to build a plan that is based on factual data that had helped identify where the community needs and resources are.

# Asset Map Example (Muncie, Indiana)

## LOCATIONS OF INTEREST



- **Golf Courses**
  - 1 Crestview
  - 2 Delaware Country Club
  - 3 Maplewood
  - 4 Muncie Elks Country Club
  - 5 Players Club
  - 6 Cardinal Hills
- ◆ **Recreation Centers**
  - 7 Ball Memorial Hospital Wellness Center
  - 8 Big Daddy's Iron Horse Gym
  - 9 BSU Adult Fitness Program
  - 10 BSU Recreation Facilities
  - 11 Curves
  - 12 Life Time Fitness
  - 13 Midwest HealthStrategies
  - 14 Midwest HealthStrategies
  - 15 Modern Lady
  - 16 Positive Movement Pilates
  - 17 Studio 22
  - 18 YWCA
  - 19 YMCA Central
  - 20 YMCA Northwest
  - 21 YWCA South
- **Swimming**
  - 22 Catalina Club
  - 23 BSU Lewellen Pool
  - 24 Halteman Pool
  - 25 Prairie Creek Reservoir
  - 26 Tuhey Park
  - 27 Water Bowl
- **Parks**
  - 28 Aultshire Park
  - 29 Ball Corporation Park
  - 30 Big Oak Park Campground
  - 31 Camp Red Wing
  - 32 Cardinal Greenway
  - 33 Chambers Park
  - 34 Cooley Park
  - 35 Cowing Park
  - 36 Delaware County Fairgrounds
  - 37 Emerson Memorial Greenspace Park
  - 38 Gilbert Park
  - 39 Guthrie Park
  - 40 Heekin Park
  - 41 Jacks Park
  - 42 Jerry L. Thornburg Memorial Park
  - 43 Lion's Club Park
  - 44 Mansfield Park
  - 45 Matthews Park
  - 46 McCullough Park
  - 47 Mornings de Park
  - 48 Morrow's Meadow
  - 49 Muncie Cantilevered Walkway
  - 50 Oak Park
  - 51 Prairie Creek Reservoir and Campground
  - 52 Riverview Park
  - 53 Rose Park
  - 54 Thomas Park
  - 55 Tuhey Park
  - 56 Washington Park
  - 57 Westside Park
- ◆ **Various Facilities**
  - 58 ARF Dog Park
  - 59 BSU Cardinal Creek Tennis Courts
  - 60 Farmer's Market
  - 61 Muncie Central High School
  - 62 Muncie Sportsplex
  - 63 YMCA Northwest

## Planning tools and resources

### **American Factfinder**

(<http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html>). Based on U.S. Census Bureau data, users can create a variety of tables, reports, or maps with information on their community that is available in this resource.

### **Blueprint for Action: Developing Livable Communities for All Ages**

([http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/Blueprint\\_for\\_Action\\_web.pdf](http://www.aginginplaceinitiative.org/storage/aipi/documents/Blueprint_for_Action_web.pdf)). From the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Partners for Livable Communities, and the MetLife Foundation, this guide provides local leaders with tools to build the collaborations needed to create livable communities for people of all ages. The guide can be used as a quick-reference kit for practitioners looking for tools, resources, and best practices. The resources at the end of the guide can be used to find the information most immediately relevant to your community's priorities and challenges.

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Promoting Physical Activity: A Guide for Community Action**

([http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/health\\_professionals/promotion/community\\_guide.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/health_professionals/promotion/community_guide.htm)). This guide offers creative, fresh ideas for promoting physical activity in your community, workplace, school, or health care facility. Practical examples drawn from a variety of settings; helpful hints on how to create a positive environment where physical activity is accessible, safe, affordable, and fun. There is extensive information on sources for additional help.

### **Evaluation and Data Collection Tools from the Center for Substance Prevention**

(<http://prevention.samhsa.gov/evaluation/default.aspx>). This website offers tools for designing an outcome or process evaluation and identifying data collection strategies; technical assistance to answer questions related to evaluation; assistance with planning evaluation efforts; and suggested data collection instruments.

### **Field Guide to Nonprofit Strategic Planning and Facilitation**

([http://www.managementhelp.org/plan\\_dec/str\\_plan/str\\_plan.htm](http://www.managementhelp.org/plan_dec/str_plan/str_plan.htm)). This guidebook focuses on customizing and implementing an organization- or program-wide, strategic planning process for a nonprofit organization. Guidelines show how to conduct a complete, realistic, simplified strategic planning process that is flexible and suited to the nature of nonprofit organizations. Guidelines are useful to cultures that prefer rational approaches to planning or more naturalistic and unfolding (organic) approaches.

### **National Civic League Community Visioning/Strategic Planning Handbook**

([http://www.ncl.org/publications/descriptions/community\\_visioning.html](http://www.ncl.org/publications/descriptions/community_visioning.html)). This handbook provides a step-by-step guide to creating a sustainable vision and action plan for communities. From the logistical planning of the initiating committee to the implementation of the community plan, communities will learn how to engage broad-based community participation, evaluate their civic infrastructure and effectively reach their desired future.

### **University of Kansas Community Toolbox. Developing a Strategic Plan, Organizational Structure, and Training System. Chapter 8. Developing a Strategic Plan**

([http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/chapter\\_1007.htm](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/chapter_1007.htm)). This information covers seven issues: Overview of strategic planning; developing a vision and mission statement, creating objectives, developing strategies, developing an action plan, obtaining feedback from constituents, and identifying action steps to bring about community and systems change.

### **Zoning Practice**

(<http://www.planning.org/zoningpractice/>). From the American Planning Association, this online publication helps guide you as you write and administer smart development codes.

## Needs assessment tools and resources:

### **Community Health Promotion: Mobilizing Your Community to Promote Health**

(<http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/hpkit/index.htm>). This kit from the Minnesota Department of Health can assist in developing strategies. The guide was built on a five-phase framework of community health. Phase one outlines an eight-step process to determine community assets.

### **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Online Course.**

([http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/cls/needs\\_assessment.html](http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cms/cls/needs_assessment.html)). This course introduces professionals to needs assessments and what it means to conduct one. By assessing target audience needs, programs can determine a focus and direction and make more informed decisions about program or project objectives. While this is developed for coastal management professionals, the content is useful for work in on a variety of areas, such as physical activity.

### **SMART: BRFSS City and County Data**

(<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/BRFSS-SMART/>). The Selected Metropolitan/Micropolitan Area Risk Trends (SMART) project uses the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) to analyze the data of selected metropolitan and micropolitan statistical areas (MMSAs) with 500 or more respondents. BRFSS data can be used to identify emerging health problems, establish and track health objectives, and develop and evaluate public health policies and programs.

### **University of Kansas Community Toolbox. Community Assessment, Agenda Setting, and Choice of Broad Strategies**

([http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/chapter\\_1003.htm](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/chapter_1003.htm)). Chapter 3 of this community toolbox outlines a 19-steps process for assessing community needs and resources.

### **United States Department of Agriculture Cooperative Extensive System Offices**

(<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/Extension/index.html>). Each U.S. state and territory has a state office at its land-grant university and a network of local or regional offices. These offices provide useful, practical, and research-based information on a variety of topics. Many state extension offices provide information, training, and tools related to community assessments.

### **YMCA Community Healthy Living Index**

(<http://www.ymca.net/communityhealthylivingindex/>). This is a set of five community assessment tools that measure opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating in areas that impact an individual's daily life. These tools also facilitate discussion about how to improve the community environment to increase opportunities for healthy living.

### **Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System**

(<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/yrbs/>). The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) monitors priority health-risk behaviors and the prevalence of obesity and asthma among youth and young adults. The YRBSS includes a national school-based survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state, territorial, tribal, and local surveys conducted by state, territorial, and local education and health agencies and tribal governments.